

T H E

1035^B 8, aa. 35.

PORTSMOUTH 1-9.

GUIDE;

O R,

A DESCRIPTION of the ancient
and present State of the Place;

Its BUILDINGS, CHARITABLE FOUN-
DATIONS, FAIRS, MARKETS,
PLAY-HOUSE and ASSEMBLY-ROOM;

With the Times of coming in and going out
of MACHINES, WAGGONS, POSTS, &c.

To which is added,

Some Account of the ISLE OF WIGHT,
a Description of SPITHEAD, the HAR-
BOUR, the DOCK-YARD, GUN-WHARF,
COMMON, GOSPORT, HASLAR HOSPI-
TAL, several of the adjacent TOWNS,
GENTLEMEN'S SEATS, &c. &c.

Interspersed with many PARTICULARS,
Useful, Curious, and Entertaining.

P O R T S M O U T H:

Printed and sold by R. CARR, Corner of
the GRAND PARADE. 1775.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]



T O
PETER TAYLOR
ESQUIRE,

ONE OF
The REPRESENTATIVES in
PARLIAMENT,
For the BOROUGH of
PORTSMOUTH;

This little WORK is most humbly
inscribed,

By his most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

The EDITOR.

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PREFACE.

IT has long been a frequent and just complaint with strangers, that amongst the number of Guides extant, no one has been furnished for Portsmouth: — A town confessedly of great importance, not only from its situation, but its antiquity, and the many interesting events produced in it from the earliest periods of history. In order to obviate this complaint, and at the same time to do justice to a place which has suffered much from the false accounts of people totally unacquainted with

it, the following work was undertaken. With what success the attempt has been attended, the Editor does not presume to determine: But however censurable his abilities may be found upon examination, the purity of his intentions, he hopes will screen him from the imputation of vanity, and extenuate in some measure the errors he may be charged with in the execution of his plan. Thus much it cannot be amiss to say in his own favour. He has spared no labour in the collection of materials, in searching into the authenticity of every circumstance he has related, and in endeavouring to the utmost of his power to place them before the reader in a distinct, connected, entertaining point

point of view. In a word, truth and perspicuity have been the invariable objects of his pursuit.

Portsmouth has usually been described as a damp, aguish, sickly situation : But this is so far from being just, that unexceptionably it is in every respect one of the healthiest spots in the island of Great-Britain.

Notwithstanding all the care taken with this narrative, and tho' the Editor has been in a state of very great friendly dependance in his progress through it, he does not attempt to offer it as a work of perfection. He is sensible some things have escaped his utmost researches, and shall be exceedingly

obliged

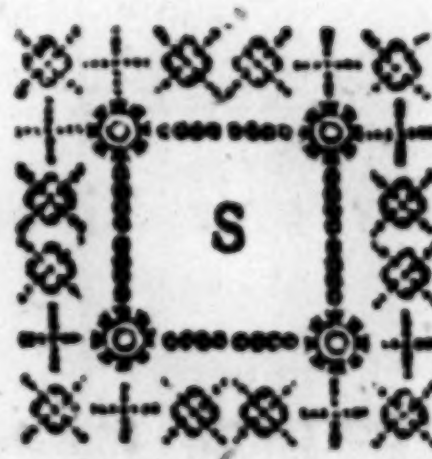
obliged therefore to any gentlemen
in possession of any useful anecdotes,
to favour him with their communi-
cations, to which a proper regard
shall be paid in a future impression.

T H E



T H E

PORTSMOUTH GUIDE, &c.

 SEVERAL writers affirm, Portsmouth derives its name from its situation at the port or mouth of a creek that runs up a part of the coast, which at high water is surrounded by the sea, and therefore called, Portsea Island; while others tell us it was built, between the years 481 and 500, by one *Portb* a Saxon, who landed here in the reign of *Aurelius Ambrosius*, second Son of *Constantine*: But as it is not our purpose to amuse the reader with conjectures instead of facts, and as this matter is involved in great obscurity; without dwelling longer upon it, we shall proceed to things of more real consequence.

Portsea

Portsea Island is a flat fertile country, about sixteen miles in circumference, joined to the main land by a stone bridge of one arch, called Ports-bridge, three miles and a half from Portsmouth, where there is a small garrison; the land in this island is esteemed as good as any in the Kingdom: there are several very good farms on it, consisting chiefly of arable land, some meadow and pasture; these hardly ever fail of yielding very plentiful crops.

Portsmouth is a handsome borough town, seventy-three miles distant from London, consisting of four principal Streets: the first at which you enter thro' the Landport gates is the High-street, very broad and regular: in a line with this to the right hand are two others named St. Thomas's and Warblington Streets, and on the left hand in the same line is another called Penny-street. These are crossed at different distances by several others, all in general, spacious, airy and well disposed. It is governed by a
Mayor

Mayor, Recorder, twelve Aldermen, Town-Clerk, and Burgesſes without limitation :

It was firſt incorporated by King *Richard* the firſt, on the ſecond of *May* 1194, in the fifth year of his reign ; who granted a Fair or Mart, for fifteen days, to begin on *St. Peter's* day, the twenty-ninth of *June* ; a weekly market on *Thursday*, and other immunities ; but by the alteration of the ſtile, the fair now begins on the tenth of *July* ; two more market days have ſince been added, *viz.* *Tuesday* and *Saturday* ; the latter, being now by much the largeſt.

The corporation have had many charters ſince from ſucceeding Kings, confirming their privileges ; the laſt of which was given by *Charles I.* (and this they now enjoy) who granted them ſeveral additional privileges ; there is a very neat Town-hall, which ſtands in the middle of the *High-ſtreet*, where is held a Court of Record, every *Tuesday*, (except at *Chriſtmas*, *Eaſter* and *Whitſunday*) in which any perſon may be held to
bail

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bail for a debt not under forty Shillings : there are two sessions of the peace in the year, *viz.* within a month after Easter and Michaelmas, wherein are tried all petty larcenies, and other small offences ; but nothing capital can be determined here. This borough sends two members to parliament, and hath done so ever since the year 1298, 26. of Edward I.

In the reign of King Richard II. when that Prince was on very bad terms with his subjects, the French took the opportunity of landing here, and burnt the town, after plundering the inhabitants of their most valuable effects : A few years after they made a second attempt to land, but the town being rebuilt, the inhabitants fitted out a fleet, gave them battle, and took all their ships, after a very desperate engagement, in which only nine of the enemy escaped with life, who having gained the shore in a boat, were immediately taken prisoners.

The

The English elated with this success, attacked the French on their own coast, sailed up the river Seine, burnt and sunk many of the enemy's ships, and returned to England with a great and rich booty of wines and other articles of merchandize. From this period the place began to flourish, the government being sensible of the importance of this town and harbour, fortified it according to the best rules laid down by the most eminent Engineers, so that it is now the only regular fortification in this kingdom, and may with propriety be called the *Key of England*.

The fortifications were begun by King Edward the fourth, augmented by the Kings, Henry VII. and VIII. and Queen Elizabeth was at so great an expence in improving the works, that nothing was thought wanting in those days to compleat them; however Charles II. added very much to their strength, extent, and magnificence;

B

and

and every year since the succeeding Kings have been making additions to the strength and beauty of the garrison : There is an annual allowance from government for keeping it in proper repair.

The Empress Maud, when she contended for the crown with K. Stephen in 1139, landed here, and when King Henry III. meditated the invasion of France, in 1229, he mustered his army near this place. In 1545, the French engaged the fleet of King Henry VIII. in the midst of the haven, the King having but six ships ; notwithstanding which, the French were defeated with great loss, tho' much superior in ships, guns and men. In this action, the Mary Rose commanded by Sir George Carew, was sunk, not by the damage received by the enemy, but some mismanagement, and the weight of her own ordnance ; the Captain, several young men

of

of quality, and the crew were lost : At that time the King being here, saw from the shore the whole action.

Portsmouth stands on a gradual descent to the sea, and since the new pavement has been finished, may be esteemed one of the most pleasant, neat and healthy towns in the kingdom ; and there have been as many instances of longevity here as in most places. This pavement took place by act of parliament, in 1768, was finished in 1773, and is as compleat a work of the kind as any in the kingdom. The expence was defrayed by the proprietors of the houses and land, and amounted to 8886l. 8s. The charges of repairs are paid by the tenants, and are collected in the same manner as the poor-rate, by an assessment of three-pence in the pound.

Though the town is very old, there are many genteel modern buildings in it : Many of the houses are appropriated to the use of lodgings, on account of the great resort here

in

in the summer season. The markets are plentifully supplied with good butcher's meat, poultry of all sorts, fish, eggs, butter, bacon, &c. ; besides which they are remarkable for large quantities of the best vegetables of every kind. Tho' provisions are much advanced in their price within these few years, they are as reasonable here, if not more so, than in any other place at an equal distance from the capital. There are three elegant Inns, *viz.* the George, Fountain, and King's-Arms, and a very good Coffee-house, on the Grand Parade, called the Crown.

The Grand Parade is at the lower end of the High-street, it is very spacious ; two regiments of soldiers may be reviewed on it with ease. On one side stands the main guard-house to the garrison. From this you go by an easy ascent to the platform, the principal saluting battery ; from which there is an amazing fine prospect of Spithead and the Isle of Wight.

The

The Ramparts are a beautiful elevated terrace walk, of a mile and a quarter round, edged with elm trees, kept in the most regular order. From this eminence, the unbounded prospect of the sea, contrasted with the landscape, which the neighbouring country affords, forms one of the most striking variegated scenes imaginable. Indeed it has always been an object of the highest admiration to strangers, and we may venture to say ever will be so, as long as the beauties of nature and art continue to merit our attention.

At the upper end of the Grand Parade, stands a fine old building, formerly a monastery, called *God's House*, it was built by William of Wickham, whose brother in 1367, was Prior of it; at the dissolution of religious houses by Henry VIII. it was converted into a dwelling-house, for the Captain or Governor of the garrison, since which, great alterations and modern additions have been made to it; the present Governor is General Harvey: Adjoining to this house is

a handsome spacious chapel, for the use of the officers and foldiers belonging to the garrison; there was also an hospital, named St. Nicholas, by the chapel gate, built for the reception of a certain number of old men, but time has destroyed this piece of antiquity.—That part of the Parade fronting the Governor's house, was formerly a burying ground to the monastery; about forty-two years ago, many human sculls and bones were dug out of this ground, in making a foundation for part of the works.

The governor's house, during the existence of the monastery, was a large square stone building at the bottom of the high street, which for some time past has been employed as a magazine for powder; but as another has lately been built three miles up the harbour, it is very little used for that purpose now.

On the front of the above building, in a

niche

niche in the wall is placed a bust of Charles I. in fine cast Brass, and on a Stone underneath is the following inscription, almost worn out by time :

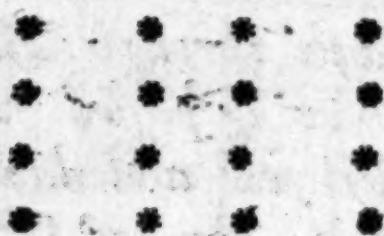
After his travels through all France into Spain, and having passed very many dangers both by sea and land, he arrived here, the 5th. day of October, 1623. There was the greatest applause of joy for his safety throughout the kingdom, that ever was known or heard of.

When the civil wars broke out between Charles I. and his parliament, this town and fort was seized by the latter as a place of great importance ; but it was one of the first that declared for Charles II. when they heard of Monk's restoring him to the crown ; Catherine, the consort of that Prince, landed here from Lisbon, where she waited five days before the King's arrival, when they were married by Dr. Sheldon, in the Governor's chapel. As it may gratify the curious, we shall insert the following extract of a letter, from Charles II. to Lord Clarendon, on his marrying the Queen at Portsmouth, from Macpherson's original papers.

“ Portm.

“ Portsmouth. 21st. May, 8. in the Morning.”

“ I arrived here yesterday about two in the afternoon, and as soon as I had shifted myself I went to my wife’s chamber.



her face is not so exact as to be called a beauty, though her eyes are excellent good, and not any thing in her face, that in the least degree can shock one. On the contrary, she has as much agreeableness in her looks altogether, as ever I saw; and if I have any skill in physiognomy, which I think I have, she must be as good a woman as ever was born. Her conversation as much as I can perceive, is very good; for she has wit enough, and a most agreeable voice. You would much wonder to see how well we are acquainted already. In a word I think myself very happy; but, I am confident, our two humours will agree very well together. I have not time to say any more. My Lord Lieutenant will give you an account of the rest.”

The

The next thing we shall consider is the Church, which stands nearly in the center of the Town. As there is an ancient as well as modern part, it will be best to begin with the Chancel, as that is the oldest part ; being supposed to have been built between four and five hundred years ago, by Peter de Rupibus, Bishop of Winchester, but there are greater reasons for thinking it was erected in the time of Thomas à Becket Archbishop of Canterbury, as the old Church was dedicated to St. Thomas, and the new one still retains that name.

The body of the present Church, was finished in the Year 1693, and the Chancel was at that time altered and beautified.

The Tower of the old Church was in the center, and the two great Pillars against which the Pulpit and the list of Benefactors to the Organ stand, were two of the four, which supported it. The Church is embellished with a good and well ton'd Organ, built in 1718, by Subscription.

In

In the Chancel behind the Communion-Table is a large, elegant Marble Monument, erected to the memory of the Duke of Buckingham, who in the reign of Charles I. 1628, was stabbed in the high-street by Felton, a Lieutenant, belonging to one of the Regiments; the House where the fact was committed is now standing; he frankly confessed the murder as soon as he had perpetrated it, saying he did it to serve the cause of God and his Country; the King advised with the Judges about torturing him, but none of them would consent to it; so that he was tried and condemned in the usual way, and executed at Tyburn; his Body afterwards being sent to Portsmouth, where it was hanged in chains without the Town; a mark now remains to shew where the Gibbet stood; it is not many years since it fell down through decay. ----On the Monument is the following inscription.

GEORGIO

GEORGIO VILLERIO BUCKINGHAM:
DUCI,

Qui majoribus utrinq: clarissimis oriundus; Patre
GEORGIO VILLERIO DE BROOKSBY *in comit.*
Leicestr,

Milit: Matre MARIA BEAUMONT BUCKING-
HAM: COMITISSA,

Cunctis naturæ fortunæq: dotibus insignis
Duorum prudentissimorum Principum gratia,
suisq: meritis

Vota suorum Supergress: rerum gerendarum meli
Par soli. Invidiæ impar: dum exercitus iterum
in hostem

Parat hoc in oppido cædis immaniss: fatali arena
Novo cruoris & lachrymar inundante oceano
Nefaria perditissimi Sicarii manu
Percussus occubuit

Anno Domini 1628. Mense Aug: die 23.

Viro ad omnia quæ maxima essent nato ejusq:

Et suis hic una confossis visceribus
SUSANNA Soror, DENBIGHIÆ COMITISSA,
Cum Lachrymis et Luctu perpetuo p.

Anno Domini 1631.

Tu Viator si qua tibi pietatis viscera tam indignum
Tanti viri casum indignatundus geme ---
Et Vale.

I N

I N E N G L I S H.

Sacred to the memory of GEORGE VILLERS DUKE of BUCKINGHAM, son of the ILLUSTRIOUS Sir GEORGE VILLERS of Brooksby, in the county of Leicester and MARY BEAUMONT, COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAM, who possessed in an eminent degree the gifts of nature and fortune, as well as the favour of two most excellent Princes: his exalted abilities exceeding the expectations of all men, rendered him equal to the weight of the highest employments of state, unequal alone to the shafts of envy. Whilst he was preparing his army to a second attack of the enemy at this port, the fatal shore of a murder unexampled, an ocean of blood and tears suddenly overflowing it; on the 23d of August 1628 he was stabbed by the impious hand of an accursed assassin. In commemoration of his many excellencies and of the loss she sustained in him, his inconsolable sister SUSANNA, COUNTESS of DENBIGH, erected this monument in the year 1631. Reader! if thou hast any yearnings of affect-

*affection within thee, bewail with indignation
the undeserved fall of this great man. Farewell.*

In a marble urn, in the center of the monument, his heart is supposed to be deposited.

The present tower and cupola were built several years after the church; over this cupola is a lantern, containing one bell, formerly employed to give notice how many ships appeared in the offing; a watchman was kept in this lantern for the above purpose, but it is now only used in cases of fire. Above this lantern, instead of a weathercock, is a ship completely rigged, about six feet in length from stem to stern: her flags traversing extremely well, exhibits a very pleasing appearance.

The height of the tower is 120 feet. There is a very musical ring of eight bells; five of which were given by Prince George of Denmark, who at the request of Sir George Rook,

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had

had them removed from an old pharos or watch-tower, within the fortification of Dover castle : but these afterwards were recast, and three more added by the town. There is also a set of chimes, the gift of Mr. William Brandon, in 1703.

There are four good barracks : two for the invalid regiment in garrison † ; a third for the companies of artillery, who do duty here ; and the fourth for the marines of this division, that they may be in readiness to embark on board the ships as they are wanted. The marine barracks were formerly the King's cooperage, but as the situation of Gosport was found more eligible, the cooperage was a few years ago removed thither : of which we shall speak when we make mention of that place.

The

† Where the invalid barracks by St. Mary's-Street now stands, was formerly a religious-house, called St. Mary's, the burying-ground of which is still in use.

The Victualing-Office is a large edifice in King's-street, with a handsome house annexed for the agent victualler, the principal officer belonging to it. Here beef and pork are slaughtered and salted, biscuit baked, and every other necessary of provision stored for the service of the navy.

The Armoury, tho' much inferior to that in the tower, is by no means unworthy of notice. It is an old building near St. Mary's street, containing arms for five thousand men, which are kept in the most exact order.

In Penny-street there is a grammar-school, under the patronage of the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, Oxford, with a genteel house for the residence of the principal master. It was founded by the late Dr. Smith, physician of this place. In this school are taught the learned languages, and the mathematics in all it's branches, navigation, &c. for which last intentions a particular

master hath been lately appointed. There is an alms-house for eight poor widows, endowed by a Mr. Burges.

At the upper end of the High street, is a neat and regular theatre, at which a company of comedians from the houses in London generally play during the summer season. In the winter it is converted into an assembly-room, as the opera-house in the Hay-Market, London. The assembly is supported by subscription. In 1754, was built by subscription of the inhabitants, a large and commodious bathing-house, containing four fine baths of different depths of water, two of them large enough to swim in. It is situated near the mouth of the harbour, close to the run of the tide, and every flood is plentifully supplied with water. In it are two good dressing-rooms, one for the gentlemen, one for the ladies, with every other necessary accommodation. For those who prefer it, there is a safe place for open bathing along the

South

South-sea beach, where the sea covers a fine gravelly bottom, to the length of half a mile.

It is much to be wondered at, that Southampton (whose waters are of a mixed kind, partly fresh, partly salt) should be preferred to Portsmouth, for the purposes of bathing. Certainly the large flux and reflux of pure salt-water at this port, must be infinitely superior in all cases, where seawater is recommended as useful.—For the prices of bathing, see the end of the book.

We shall now proceed to the King's mill, Gun-wharf, Dock-yard, &c. &c. The King's mill is situated about a quarter of a mile beyond the quay-gate, in the road to the dock-yard, and is a large brick building, raised on great piles, 25 and 30 feet long, shoed with iron, and driven into a marshy ground. This work cost the government between 6 and 7000l. The mill is worked by a great stream of salt-water from the harbour every tide, which is received by means of a

fluice, into a very large basin close to the mill, and contiguous to a part of the works: the fluice is let down at high-water, and when the tide has ebbed some little time, the water is worked back again into the harbour. Most of the grain used in Town, Common, and adjacent places, is ground at this mill, and so would the corn for the use of the navy and garrison, in case of a siege.

A little beyond the mill is the Gun-wharf. This is the grand arsenal for cannon, mortars, bombs, carcases, carriages, ball of all dimensions ; and has large storehouses, fitted with every necessary requisite for a sea or land engagement. Every ship in ordinary has on the wharf her guns, placed in regular rows, each ship's guns by themselves, with the name of the ship they belong to, painted in capital letters on the first gun of each parcel, and all kept in exceeding good order: the balls are formed in regular pyramids, from 42 pounders to the lowest bores, every
size

size in a pyramid; the bomb-shells in the same regular order.

There are genteel houses, exclusive of the offices, for the officers to reside in, all walled in with a strong high brick wall; these with the walks before them, the rows of trees, and the wilderness, have a most pleasing effect on the spectator. From hence we proceed through the Common, (which we shall describe in its proper place) to the Dock-yard, which is esteemed the largest and most superb in the known world.

The Dock-yard resembles a town in the number of its dwelling-houses, offices, store-houses, lofts, and other edifices erected for carrying on the various purposes of the yard. It contains amazing quantities of every thing necessary for the royal navy. There are never less than 2000 men employed in it, and in time of war, upwards of 2500, who last war were all disciplined and formed into a regular body, ready for action

action in case of necessity. They were under the command of the commissioner as their colonel; the master-builder lieutenant-colonel; the clerk of the cheque major; the captains and subalterns being chosen from among the other officers.

The Commissioner's house is very genteel and commodious, the King lodged in it when he honoured this place with a visit, in 1773: there is a row of well-built brick houses in a part of the yard, wherein dwell the builder, the clerk of the cheque, store-keeper, clerk of the survey, the masters attendants, &c. There are houses in different parts of the yard for the rest of the officers. In the front of the above row, is a beautiful double-gilt statue of King William III. standing on a marble pedestal, the gift of colonel Rich. Norton, of Southwick, finished in the manner of the Cæsars, with this inscription:

GVLIEL

G V L I E L M O

I I I.

O P T I M O R E G I

C I O D C C X V I I I.

Ricardus Norton humillime D. D.

The Rope-house wherein the cables are made, is 1094 feet long, by 54 broad; The spinning-house over it is of the same demensions; some of the cables are so large that eighty men are required to work them, who from the laboriousness of the business are not able to continue at it above four hours in the day. A royal academy is established here at the public expence, where youth are instructed in every branch of learning, necessary to qualify them for the service of the royal navy. In this seminary, the strictest care and attention are taken of the young gentlemens education. The commissioner is governor of this academy.

In

In one of the rooms is a superb model of the Victory, a first-rate ship of war, built in this yard, and unfortunately lost with the brave Admiral Balchen, near the Race of Alderney, in the year 1744. This ship mounted 110 brass cannon, and had on board 1000 men, all of whom perished. This model is about five feet long from the taffarel to the head, and was built in this yard at an amazing expence; all the running rigging is twisted silk, the carved work on the head and stern is very minute and beautiful; it is preserved in a glass-case, and is really without exaggeration, a most valuable piece of workmanship. Under a glass cupola, in the same room, is a very fine Orrery, constructed by the ingenious artist Mr. Wright. Near the academy is an Observatory, furnished with every necessary instrument, proper for the uses for which it was raised.

A little farther from hence stands the chapel for divine service. The docks and basons
are

are beyond every thing we can conceive magnificent. Within these few years a piece of new ground of about fourteen acres, on the north side has been added, being taken from the harbour, and raised to a level with the other parts of the yard. On a declivity to the harbour, on this new ground, are four slips, two for building large ships, and two for smaller rates; besides these, two other slips are intended to be made.

The Blacksmith's shop, where all the anchors and iron-work are wrought for the navy, is the next structure that claims our attention: some of the anchors weigh from forty to eighty hundred weight. This shop strikes the spectator at first view, with the remembrance of the fabulous story of the forge of Vulcan, and the workmen bring to his recollection the figures of the Cyclops. The men of war on the stocks, and those under repair in the docks, are very striking to strangers, as is also the conveniency of stepping

ping

ping from the shore on board these floating castles, when they are out of the docks, and lie along-side the jetty-heads.

A more minute description of the yard would engross more room than our plan will permit; it will be sufficient to add in general terms, that it furnishes every article for the completion of our ships; that an inconceivable regularity is observed in the disposition of the stores of every kind, and that it is very justly the admiration of the whole world. Whilst the attention of the reader is upon this subject, we shall proceed to an account of two dreadful fires, which happened in the yard some years ago, beginning with that in 1760.

On the third of July, 1760, just after midnight, a dreadful fire broke out in the Dock-yard, in one of the principal warehouses, wherein was deposited pitch, tar, oil and turpentine, with vast quantities of other combustible materials, which it soon reduced

reduced to ashes, but it did not stop here, for having communicated itself to another warehouse, where were prodigious quantities of dry stores, it raged with an amazing and dreadful rapidity. According to the most general opinion it was set on fire by lightning, and indeed not without great reason was it supposed to be so; for a night of severer thunder and lightening was scarcely ever remembered; and as all, or most of the windows of the lofts where the hemp was deposited were left open to air it, the season being uncommonly sultry; its taking fire was not to be wondered at, from the intense heat of the atmosphere; but as the lightening was accompanied with a very heavy rain the chief part of the night, happily the conflagration did not extend through the whole yard; the loss on this occasion was immense, but such was the assiduity of administration, to make good the damage it had sustained, that the whole

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was

was in a few months put into as perfect a state as before this accident happened: Thus the dock-yard like another phoenix, arose afresh from its own ashes. But still a more horrible conflagration happened in this yard, on the 27th. of July, 1770, about three o'clock in the morning; as no reasonable proof has ever been produced of its being occasioned by lightening, or any other accidental cause; and as the utmost precautions are always used to prevent any ill effects from fire, the public are of opinion it was perpetrated by emissaries, at that time in concert with Spain, to deprive us of some of our most valuable colonies; it is not well known who first discovered it, but from some circumstances, it appears to have been the centinels on duty, as about five o'clock in the morning, a gentleman in his study saw a prodigious smoak proceeding from the rope-house, which alarmed him much, and was going to acquaint the offi-

cers

cers on duty of it, when he heard the drums beat to arms, and very soon after saw the whole dock-yard as it were in flames.

The house where the pitch and tar were lodged, was soon reduced to a heap of rubbish. Shortly after which, the fire broke out in four other different places, and burned with such violence that it threatened the destruction of the whole yard; the inhabitants were filled with the utmost consternation, but by the shifting of the wind, the assistance of the artificers, the seamen and marines, together with numbers of other people who lent their aid, the progress of the flames was stopped, about three in the afternoon. The confusion of all ranks of people rendered it impossible to collect such authentic particulars concerning the rise of this dreadful event as we could wish: The accounts mostly to be depended upon, are that the fire was seen first to burst out from the laying-house, about the middle, from

whence the flames soon communicated themselves to the spinning-house, owing to some temporary sheds erected between the two buildings, from hence they reached to the oar-house, and set fire to the carpenter's shop, at which time the other storehouses caught, the flames spreading as far as the mast-house, so that in a few hours, masts, cables, and the most valuable materials of the yard were totally consumed: The carpenters shop and mast-house were intirely destroyed. Indeed none of the different departments escaped considerable hurt. The total loss was estimated at an amazing sum.

The accident falling out at a time when we were apparently on the eve of a war, gave rise to many disagreeable suspicions, which a variety of collateral circumstances served much to corroborate. A few days before the fire, more Foreigners than usual were seen in different parts of the town, some of them persons of seeming distinction ;
and

and it was remarked at the same time several French vessels had been seen hovering about the coast, which all disappeared as soon as the fire happened. By the unwearied exertions of government, which were astonishingly great on this occasion, the above losses were repaired in about eighteen months; losses! in themselves sufficient to have ruined some states.

To relieve in some measure the distress, which the mind of the reader must have necessarily felt from the accounts of these horrible devastations, we shall lay before him an authentic narrative of the Royal Naval Review, in 1773, than which, this nation never had a more evident manifestation of its splendor, magnificence and importance.

Early on Tuesday morning, the 22d. day of June, 1773, the King sat out from Kew, for Portsmouth, and being arrived at Portsbridge, between ten and eleven the same morning, was welcomed by a royal salute of

twenty-one guns. His Majesty then proceeded to the first barrier, where Major General Parker delivered the keys of the garrison to him, who returned them. On his entering the Landport gate, he was saluted with a triple discharge of 232 pieces of cannon. He passed through the town to the commissioner's house in the dock-yard, where he was received by many of the nobility. The artificers of the yard being all assembled before the house, gave three cheers as he entered, and then immediately returned to their several employments. After taking some refreshment, His Majesty, with his retinue, went to the Governor's house in the town, and had a public levee, at which numbers of all ranks were present.

The Mayor and Corporation waited on him with an address; were graciously received; and kissed his hand: The honour of knighthood being conferred on the Mayor; the

the levee ended, the King returned to the Dock-yard, and from thence proceeded in a barge to Spithead, accompanied with the Board of Admiralty, the three Admirals with their flags, and all the Captains of the fleet in their respective barges. As he passed by the garrison, he was saluted with twenty-one guns, and when the standard was seen by the fleet at Spithead, consisting of twenty ships of the line, two frigates and three sloops, the whole saluted with twenty-one guns each.

The King went on board the *Barfleur*, of ninety guns, the standard was then hoisted at the main-topmast head, and saluted by all the ships with twenty-one guns. After having viewed the ship; at half past three o'clock, His Majesty sat down to dinner, after which the Queen's health being drank, the whole fleet saluted with twenty-one guns; and upon his quitting the table, his health was drank with the like salute.

This

This was done every day during his stay.

His Majesty at six o'clock went into his barge, the other barges attending as before, and passed every ship, each saluting him with twenty-one guns. He then went on board the Augusta yacht, and sailed into the harbour, attended with the barges, and saluted as upon his coming out.

On Wednesday, His Majesty viewed the dock-yard, harbour, and ships in ordinary, and afterwards went to Spithead to dine on board the Barfleur, and returned in the evening, accompanied as before. On Thursday he viewed the Gun-wharf, different parts of the yard, the brewery and magazines. After which he had another public levee at the Governor's house, from whence he proceeded in the same state as on the preceeding days, to dine on board the Barfleur. Many were knighted this day. In the evening he returned to the dock, as on the former days.

On

On Friday he viewed the new works and fortifications at Portsmouth; and then sailed out of the harbour in the Augusta yacht, being saluted in his passage. On his arrival at Spithead, Lord Edgcombe, with his division, got under sail, and followed His Majesty; the yacht proceeded as far as Sandown bay, then it returned with Lord Edgcombe's division to St. Helens, and from thence to Spithead, leaving his Lordship and his division to proceed to Plymouth, according to orders before given.

After this, the King stood towards the harbour, and anchored near South-sea beach. While the yacht was at anchor, the land-forces from the ramparts, at ten o'clock, fired a feu de joie, by a triple discharge of cannon and musquetry all round the works, after which His Majesty landed at the dock. Several promotions were made this day.

The sea and shores were covered with an incredible number of vessels and people
each

each day ; and Gosport, Common and Portsmouth were illuminated every evening. On Saturday, a quarter before seven in the morning, His Majesty sat out from hence on his return to Kew, where he arrived about two in the afternoon. He was saluted by a triple discharge of cannon, as at his entrance : Many thousands of people attended with the loudest acclamations. He left 1500*l.* to be distributed to the artificers of the different departments : 350*l.* to the seamen of the *Barfleur*, yacht, and of his barge, and 250*l.* to the poor. He released the prisoners also confined for debt. He expressed the highest approbation of the good order and discipline of his fleet, of the excellent condition of the dock-yard, &c. and of the regularity with which every thing was conducted ; and shewed the utmost satisfaction at the demonstrations of loyalty and affection with which he was received by all ranks of people.

The

The next place we shall consider as meriting our attention is the Common, a kind of suburb or additional town to Portsmouth, on a part of which the dock-yard stands. About eighty years ago this was a common field, with only one hovel upon it: But the prodigious resort of people to this port, within these late years rendering it necessary to increase their buildings, they employed this field for that purpose, and have continued to build with such rapidity, that from a barren desolated heath, it is now become a very populous genteel town, exceeding Portsmouth itself, in the number of its inhabitants and edifices.

It is inhabited chiefly by the artificers belonging to the yard. As the church of Kingston, the parish to which it belongs, is at the distance of a mile from it, the parishioners a few years ago, (by a subscription amongst themselves) applied to parliament, and obtained an Act for erecting

a chapel of ease to their mother church, in consequence of which, they immediately built one, calling it by the name of St. George's chapel, the Corporation of Portsmouth giving them the ground it is upon. About two years ago an organ was added to it.

The Common is well paved by act of parliament, and under the government of the Corporation of Portsmouth. There are two synagogues on it, for Jews of different sects. By the chapel is an elegant Concert-room, with a good organ in it, at which there is a private concert once a week, and a public one once a quarter, supported by subscription. The performers in general are gentlemen in the neighbourhood.

Government apprehending the dock-yard not sufficiently secure on the land side, in the summer, 1770, began the foundations of a prodigious fortification round the Common, which is now carrying on with great
vigour ;

vigour ; but from the magnitude of the undertaking it is supposed it cannot be completed these ten years. Having now nothing more particular to say of the Common, we shall take a survey of the harbour, and the places contiguous to it.

This harbour is the principal one in the kingdom, it is capable of receiving the whole navy of England, and the depth of water is so great, that first rate men of war can ride at lowest ebb : It is sheltered on every point of the compass from storms, by Portsmouth, Gosport, the Common, Blockhouse, Gun-wharf, Dock-yard, and the high hill of Ports-down, and every thing considered with respect to it, forms one of the finest ports in Europe.

At the head of one of the branches of the harbour is a little village named Porchester, originally a place of great importance, being the town to which the harbour formerly belonged.

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In

In this village, by the sea-shore, stand the ruins of a very ancient castle, which a very old author says, was called by the Britons *Caer Peris*, and built about the time Rome was, by *Pereis* or *Perrox*, the second son of *Sifil*, the founder of *Silchester*, naming it after his own name, and made it the seat of his kingdom.

This *Sifil* had two sons, *Ferrex* and *Perrex*, who in the old age of their father, contending who should succeed him; *Perrex* attempted by treachery his brother's life; drove him into *Gaul*, and in his return, though aided with the force of that country defeated and slayed him, and then built that fort or castle upon the shore, and called it *Caer Peris*, to prevent the like invasion for the future.

Stow from *Rouse* says, *Porchester Castle* takes its name from the village whereon it stands, which was once a town of note, called

Caer

Caer Peris, built by one Gargonstus, son of Beline, who lived 375 years before Christ. It is likewise said to be the place where Vespasian landed, it had then a famous harbour, but the sea retiring, the inhabitants left the place, and removed to the Island of Portsea: In short both the founder and the time the castle was built are unknown, but it is universally acknowledged to be of very great antiquity: Thus much of the above authors.

The Castle is a square, whose internal side is 440 feet; its area contains four acres, four chains, and seven perches; the Keep encompasses a parallelogram, of 65 by 115 feet. It has had four towers, three of them standing; one of them much larger than the rest, forms the north-west angle of the square. The fourth stands at the south-east corner of building. In the square stands St. Mary's, the parish church of Porchester.

Here King Henry the first, in the year 1133, founded a priory of canons, of the order of *St. Augustine*, which was not long after removed to Southwick, two miles from Porchester, where it continued until the dissolution of monasteries.

This church has manifest marks of great antiquity, and by a moulding on the south-side of the tower, formerly serving to cover the extremity of the roof; it appears it had once a south isle, answering to that now standing on the north, which compleated the form of the cross. The east-end has been re-built, as is visible by a similar circumstance, which shews it was formerly of the same height with the west part of the body of the church.

The arches over the doors and windows of the ancient part are all circular, and at the west end are richly decorated with those indented ornaments which denote the stile to be Saxon. We are assured that Q. Elizabeth sometimes made excursions to this castle.

In

In the chancel, in a niche in the wall, on the right side of the communion-table, is an elegant bust of Sir *Thomas Cornwallis*, Knt. Groom porter to Queen Elizabeth and King James.

The last repair given to this church, was by Queen Anne, in the two last wars with France and Spain. This castle was made use of as a prison for the French and Spanish prisoners, taken in these wars at sea; of whom there has been above four thousand at a time in this castle.

As it is a delightful sail up the harbour, it is much resorted to in the summer season: As is also a neat little town called Fareham, about two miles from Porchester. It has several good modern houses, and is inhabited by many genteel families. It has a substantial Inn, the Red-Lion; at which every fortnight is held an assembly. Near half a mile from hence is Cams, the seat of General Carnac, a new and elegant building.

Opposite to Portsmouth, on the other shore, stands Gosport, a very neat town, with a decent trade in it, the buildings are mostly good, and the inhabitants genteel. In the year 1746, fortifications were raised round this town. It has two market days in the week, is well paved, and has two good inns. There is a neat chapel of ease to Alverstoke, the mother church, about a mile and half from the town, in which chapel is a handsome organ, formerly the property of the Duke of Chandois, grandfather to the present Duke : It stood in his Grace's house at Cannons, ten miles from London. The situation of this place is very pleasant, the passage to it from Portsmouth, (which is perfectly safe) is near the mouth of the harbour, and about three quarters of a mile over at high water. There are also a number of wherreis to ply the passage, for one-penny the fare. Portsmouth, Gosport and Common, are situated within the harbour's mouth, and form a kind of triangle.

At

At Weovil, near Gosport, is a large commodious cooperage and brewery, for the use of the navy : At the end of a canal which runs up close to them, there is a fine bason for the reception of vessels, that take in the beer for the supply of the ships of war.

On the west-side of the entrance into the harbour, about a quarter of a mile from Blockhouse battery, on a spot of ground formerly called Haslar farm, stands Haslar hospital, a noble large edifice for sick and wounded seamen and marines, who before were obliged to be put on board hospital ships, where from their being crowded together, tho' every possible means was used to correct the foul air, and other ill effects arising from so confined a situation, many useful lives were lost. This was an evil of great national consequence, remaining many years unremedied, till at length by the exertion and humanity of Lord Sandwich, a nobleman indefatigable in his department, a grant

was obtained from government for rearing this stately fabric, which will be an immortal honour to his memory.

It is situated on a dry gravelly soil, within four hundred yards of the water, where the sick can land at any time of tide, and is surrounded with an airing-ground, near a mile in circumference, which is inclosed with a wall twelve feet high. Near the gate, (which is a grand entrance) stands the guard-house, a very neat building, where a constant guard of marines is kept, to prevent riots or desertion; and which can accommodate a company of soldiers. It is a regular magnificent brick building, consisting of a front and two wings, each of which are composed of two distinct ranges of building: The front is 567 feet in length, and each of the wings 553 feet.

On a pediment in the front, is a handsome sculpture of Portland stone, designed by Mr. Pearce. His Majesty's arms are contained

contained in the center. On the dexter side, Navigation is represented leaning one hand on a ship's rudder, and with the other pouring balm from a cruise on a wounded sailor. The north star is over her head, and under her feet the Mariner's compass: Towards the angle appears the stern of a ship, and quite in the angle are the Zephyrs, a group of shells tied together, and a necklace of pearls. On the sinister side is represented Commerce sitting upon chests and bales of goods, distributing money, fruit, and flowers.

Towards the angle is a sailor in distress, and a bird bringing him an eel in its beak; quite in the angle are Boreas, and a group of shells. The shore on which the figures sit is ornamented with shells, and on the airing ground, near the front, are several neat houses for the officers, a wash-house, and storehouse on the inside. The hospital is surrounded with a handsome arcade,

cade, twenty-four feet broad, and with the ground on which it is built, includes an area of seven acres. The open side of this area contains the chapel, connected to the wings by a row of small stone pillars, about three feet high with chains; it is a plain and neat building, seventy-two feet long, and thirty-six broad: The burial ground is a separate inclosure beyond the airing ground. Over the entrance of the hospital is a large hall, where the recovering patients dine. This hall is one hundred feet in length, and fifty in breadth: The wards are all uniform, sixty feet long, and twenty-four broad, and have each apartments adjoining for the nurses, with a room for water; this is conveyed from a large recevoir to every part of the house; and from thence to drains beneath, which are washed by the tide twice every twenty four hours. Each ward contains twenty patients, and the whole hospital is capable of receiving two thousand men, ex-

clusive

clusive of the nurses and necessary attendants.

This building was begun in the year 1746, and finished in 1762.

Between Blockhouse fort and Gosport, there runs a lake above two miles, to a very pleasant village called Aylmerstoke. About half a mile up this lake, there is a landing at a large pier head, which is the proper landing place to Haslar.

About three quarters of a mile south of Portsmouth, on the beach of a common, called South-sea Common, close to the water's edge, stands South-sea Castle, built by King Henry VIII. It is fortified with a good counterscarp, and double moat with ravelins and double pallisadoes, besides the advanced works to cover the place from any approach where it may be practicable. It is a noble defence to the harbour. King Edward VI. in a tour he made into these parts, lay one night in this castle.

In

In 1759, August 23, about eight o'clock in the morning, part of this castle was blown up: The circumstances of which were as follows.

The regiment commanded by his Grace the Duke of Richmond, being encamped on South-sea Common, near the above fort, had leave to deposit their powder and ball in the east wing of it; the day before the accident, they had been filling cartridges for the exercise of the men, of which they had filled nine barrels, with the ball at the bottom of the barrels; these were placed in a lower room, over which there was a barrack, where two women were washing and dressing victuals, with a large fire of furze, the flooring of the room being very old, it is supposed that some of the sparks of fire fell through the vacancies of the floor on the loose powder the soldiers had carelessly scattered about in their work the day before, and communicated to the barrels,

rels, when in an instant, all that quarter of the fort was blown up with a great explosion, and many people buried under the ruins; one invalid soldier was blown out of the fort above a hundred yards upon the glacis, he was much blackened by the powder, and received a bruise on his head: The centinel, another invalid, was blown over the parapet wall, into the dry ditch, one leg and one arm being torn off, which were afterwards found lying on the parapet wall; it is remarkable that one man as he stood on the wall some little distance from the fatal spot, escaped without any other hurt than that at the instant the explosion happened, he was deprived of his senses, and remained for some little time in the same position he was in when the event happened; nor did he stir until being shaken by some people who saw him, he awaked as out of a sleep, without any recollection of what had happened. There were seven-

teen men, women and children, dug out of the rubbish, all dead except one old soldier, who breathed hard three or four times, and expired. The force of the explosion burst open the door of the great magazine, to the west quarter of the castle, where was lodged a great deal of powder, and tore a large bolt off, but happily it reached no farther; all the windows of the castle were broken, and great part of the whole building damaged; the grand batteries towards the sea were not in the least affected, nor were any of those round the fort, except in one place a little of the parapet wall towards the land was removed, and the top of the wall thrown down.

Near three miles from this castle, on the coast, stands Cumberland Fort, between which and South-sea Castle, are two other forts, at proper distances, which the late Lord Tyrawley caused to be erected for the defence of the coast.

Having

Having now taken a pretty extensive survey of Portsmouth,† and the places adjoining to it, bordering on the sea, we shall proceed to an examination of such contiguous parts of it which lead towards the country, beginning our rout at the principal entrance into the town, called the Landport Gates.

After passing through these, the first thing that naturally strikes the eye of the stranger, are the works or fortifications, the most regular in the kingdom, so strong as to be able to stand out against a large army for many weeks, for round the town is a glacis and covered way; a deep fosse, which in half

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† It may not be improper to remark that Portsmouth gave the title of Dutchess, to Louisa de Quenouille concubine to King Charles II.—The flag of Don Blas, the Spanish Admiral, which was taken at Cathagena, by Admiral Vernon, was by him presented to the Corporation of Portsmouth, in the year 1741.

an hour may be filled with water eight feet high, with ravelins, and spurs on the the outside. Within the fosse, from the bottom, is a wall fifteen feet perpendicular, with a double parapet for small arms on the mount, which is planned out in bastions and curtains, the bastions regularly flanking the faces of each other, with proper cannon always mounted.

About three hundred yards without these gates, on the right-hand of the London road, a small chapel formerly stood, called Magdalen Chapel, dependant on one of the religious houses in the neighbourhood, which was destroyed at the reformation; it is not many years ago that some traces of it were to be seen.

Gatcomb house about two miles and half from hence, now the residence of Matteate Brady, *Esq*; was heretofore a monastery; several human skulls and other bones were lately dug up in making a piece of garden ground.

Adjoining

Adjoining to Gatcomb, are Hilsea barracks, large enough to receive two regiments of men. They are temporary, and were built at the desire of his Royal Highness the late Duke of Cumberland, the beginning of last war, for the reception of the troops that were to be embarked on any emergency.

Two miles farther in the London road is a high hill named Portsmouth, on which is held an annual Fair, commencing the day after the expiration of the Free-Mart at Portsmouth, and continuing three days. It is very large and much frequented, where are sold, (besides the usual things set to sale at all fairs) great quantities of cheese, bacon and cattle. The summit of this hill commands a most enchanting and comprehensive view of the Isle of Wight, the island of Portsea, St. Helen's, the Dock-yard, Harbour, Spithead, and all the forts, as well as of a great part of Sussex, Dorsetshire and Hampshire.

On the other side of the hill, and to the right-hand of the London road, is situated Purbrook house and park, the elegant seat of Peter Taylor, Esq; one of the Representatives in parliament for Portsmouth. This house is built on a gravelly sandy soil, on an eminence in the middle of a fine park, made out of part of the forest of Bere, (which was cleared at a vast expence for that purpose) and when finished will be unexceptionably one of the most delightful villas in England. And here justice compells us to render that commendation which is justly due to the man, who at an advanced period of life, and at an immense charge, has reared a sumptuous mansion in the midst of a coppice, and by that means has contributed to the comfortable subsistence of many distressed unemployed families.

To the left of the road, just under the hill, is a genteel seat called Widley, in the possession of Admiral Mountague. Two
miles

miles farther is the pleasant healthy village of Southwick, much frequented in the summer season by the principal people of Portsmouth. Before you enter it you have a view of Southwick place, a fine large mansion, the seat of the late Richard Norton, *Esq*: who in the reign of Charles I. was engaged in the parliament interest; this was formerly a religious house, but suppressed at the reformation by King Henry VIII. when the last prior, whose name was Norton, and supposed to be the ancestor of the late Richard Norton, surrendered it to the King on a yearly pension, and probably he might afterwards obtain a grant of the priory from the King or his commissioners; however if that was not the case, Southwick had been long in the possession of the Norton family; and at the decease of the above Richard Norton, *Esq*; descended to Francis Whithead, *Esq*; and at his death

came

came to the family of the present Mr. Thistlethwayte. Oliver Cromwell had a great friendship for the ancestor of the late Richard Norton, as appears from the following letter, the original of which was preserved in the family.

‘ Sir, I was in hopes to have seen you
 ‘ before your going down, but missing of
 ‘ that I thought fit to send this short epistle
 ‘ to you ; I understand Colonel Goffe will
 ‘ be at Winchester to morrow, I hope you
 ‘ will assist him with your countenance, he
 ‘ is honest and so in his business, whoever
 ‘ shall say to the contrary ; and if security
 ‘ shall be judged necessary to provide against
 ‘ malignants and papists ; if reformation
 ‘ of wickedness be a duty we owe to God,
 ‘ then my assertion is true, the person em-
 ‘ ployed is a gracious man if I know one,
 ‘ and deserves your respect ; all that I have
 ‘ to say is to tell you that I love you,

‘ I rest your loving friend,

‘ Oliver, P.

Whitehall.

• Whitehall, 29th. November, 1655.

• My service to my Lord, say if

• he be with you and my Lady.

• To Colonel Richard Norton,

• These.

• Oliver Cromwell, R.

We cannot pass over in silence here the extraordinary will of the late Richard Norton, Esq; which made so much noise in the world.

This gentleman died in December, 1732, and left his real estate of about 6000l. per annum to the "poor, hungry and thirsty, naked and strangers, sick and wounded, and prisoners to the end of the world," and appointed the parliament of Great-Britain to be his executors, and in case of their refusal, the Bishops, and left his pictures and other valuables to the King. But his will was set aside on the score of insanity.

Four miles from Ports-down, in the road to Chichester, is a very old town called Havant, with one good Inn in it, the Black-Bear, its trade consisting chiefly in corn and flour. Two miles from Havant, is Emsworth, a little seaport, from whence a large quantity of grain is generally shipped at those times when exportations are allowed. This place trades in wheat, barley and flour; sloops of considerable burthen are built here.

Three miles to the left of Emsworth, is Stanstead, the country seat of the late Earl of Halifax, who bequeathed it to his natural daughter, by Mrs. Donaldson, it is a most agreeable place, having an extensive park, and from the dining-room windows of the house, there is a compleat prospect of the Isle of Wight, together with a view of the ships at Portsmouth, St. Helen's and Spithead. The gardens and the walks in the park are extremely admired.

At

At Emsworth, you leave Hampshire, and enter into Suffex. Seven miles from hence is the ancient City of Chichester, at the distance of five miles from which is Goodwood, the seat of the Duke of Richmond, a most excellent structure, commanding a very fine and romantic prospect of the sea, the Isle of Wight, and the adjacent country covered with woods, and interspersed with villages.

Eleven miles from Chichester, in the London road from thence, is Midhurst, contiguous to which stands Cowdray, the delightful seat and park of Lord Montague. This house is finished in the Gothic taste, and is very beautiful in its kind. It stands in a valley, in one of the most agreeable places in the country. The wars of Henry VIII. are painted on the walls round a large parlour, and amongst this group of painting are the French entering Portsmouth harbour, to engage the fleet of Henry VIII.

This

This was performed by Hans Holbein, and many of the ancestors of the present noble Lord, in different parts of the house, are done by the same ingenious artist; there are several other very fine paintings by different eminent hands.

It is hoped the reader will not judge the following extract from a recent • author of high veracity unnecessary, as it will serve to confirm in a great measure the facts contained in this work.

“ The haven of Portsmouth is so well known, as to require no particular description; yet to demonstrate it's superiority to other ports, we will examine it by the characteristics of a perfect harbour, laid down from the ablest writers in naval affairs, premising that they give these

• CAMPBELL.

these only as ideal marks of what according to their conception should belong to a place deserving that title; and that the comparative value of these that really exist, may be the better understood. The first then is, that it be so situated and of such a figure as to be secure from all dangers, at least from most winds.

The harbour of Portsmouth is so covered by the towns of Portsmouth and Gosport, the Common, the Block-house, Gun-wharf, Dock-yard, Plantations, and the high hill of Portsdown, that the wind cannot blow from any point of the compass to the detriment of the ships at anchor therein. The second rule is, that it be of a proper depth, so that ships of any size may lie securely without raking their bottoms.

This port is so deep that a first-rate can ride at the lowest ebb, without touching the ground; and as she lies at anchor,

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can take in her sea stores and guns, and be out of the harbour in half an hour. The third is, that the bottom be sound and fit for anchorage: In respect to this, no harbour more exactly answers the description than that of Portsmouth. The next requires that there be no hidden rocks, shelves, sands, or other troublesome impediments; from all these this Haven is entirely exempt. The fifth demands that it should be capacious, so as to hold a large number of ships with ease and safety, and if possible, divided into several branches: This noble port is so spacious, that it can conveniently contain the whole royal navy, or at least as great a part thereof as is ever laid up in ordinary.

The sixth requisite is, that there be no bars or other obstructions to embarrass the entrance, and which may render the access difficult or dangerous. Portsmouth harbour is not broader at the mouth than
the

the Thames at Westminster, and as the water flows seven, and ebbs but five hours, the flux is greater out than in; so that the bottom is always scowering, and the water running out at an angle, throws the bar to the south-west, which is called the *spit*, and leaves a deep channel close under the shore to South-sea Castle. The next demands that the sides or the mouth be well protected by forts, Block-houses and other fortifications, more especially if it be seated immediately upon the sea.— There is scarce any thing in this respect wanting that could be wished at Portsmouth.

The eighth position is, that there be an arsenal, for building and repairing ships, commodious in all respects, and more especially for launching them: The yard of Portsmouth is so convenient, that it has not its equal; here are five docks, one of them so large as to admit two ships at a time, so that five may be docked and

cleaned in a day, while the spring-tides continue, that is between forty and fifty in a month; and the improvements made here for setting masts and rigging with the utmost dispatch, are such as would demand a long description.

The next is, that there be plenty of naval stores, ammunition, and provision of every sort. It may be affirmed, that there is no place in Europe where these are to be found better in their respective kinds, in larger quantities, or in more compleat order.

The last is, that there be a constant and sufficient garrison for the security of the port against any sudden attempt to surprize, or any descent that may be made to reduce it. This there is at Portsmouth, which is now a town regularly fortified in the modern stile; and the Common, Dock-yard and Gun-wharf, are likewise so effectually secured, that it would neces-

sarily

farily require a very numerous army to invest and besiege it; nor could it then be taken without affording time sufficient for its relief.

A further, indeed a very capital convenience to the harbour of Portsmouth, is the safe and spacious road of Spithead, which lies between the continent of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight; and is about twenty miles in length, and in some places no less than three in breadth; so that it is capable of holding a thousand ships at a time, without the least difficulty or danger; it is defended from all winds, blowing from the west to the south-east, by the high lands of the Isle of Wight; and from the winds of the opposite quarter by the main land of Hampshire; the town of Portsmouth fronting the middle of the road, the very sands in its neighbourhood contribute to its safety: As for instance, the spit lying to the north, breaks the

sea on that side, as the horse's bank does to the east; and Noman's land and the Mother-bank on the south; as to the bottom it is perfectly sound and good, and the flux and reflux of the sea, repairs all the injuries done by the anchors."

We shall now conclude with a brief description of the Isle of Wight, one of the most fertile, beautiful spots in England; it is about twenty-four miles in length, twelve in breadth, and sixty in circumference: The Island containing twenty-nine parishes, in which it has been said, there are about three thousand dwellings, and twenty-seven thousand inhabitants; its air is esteemed remarkably pure, and the soil so fruitful that it has long been allowed the annual produce of corn is sufficient for the inhabitants seven years, and so much have their arable lands been improved of late, that in the opinion of many, the proportion at present is as one to nine. Through the middle
part

part of the Island runs a continued ridge of spacious downs, containing inexhaustible mines of chalk and marl, upon the surface of these downs are bred vast numbers of sheep: The extremities of the land are for the most part a natural fortification of rocks and cliffs. There is one place* on the south-east part, which lies open to the incursions of an enemy, but this is strongly fortified by art.

The fresh water cliffs (so called from a village of that name in the neighbourhood) are very remarkable, they are prodigious promontories of chalk, rise to a stupendous height, and are the extreme boundaries of the shore on that coast; but what makes them more remarkable are the great number of exotic birds annually resorting to them to lay their eggs, hatch and breed their young.

* SANDOWN FORT.

young; they are various in their colour, species and size; at the firing of a gun they fly round, and over you in great numbers, the time of their coming (nobody knows from whence) is the end of March, or beginning of April, and when their young are fit for the migration, which is sometime in July, they all fly away.

The country people for the sake of an advantage they make by taking these birds, descend by a rope fastened to an iron bar, driven into the ground on the top of the cliff; their method is, to beat them down with a short stick as they fly in and out; a dozen of them 'tis said will yield a pound of delicate feathers, the price of which to the merchant is eight-pence, and their carcasses they sell for six-pence the dozen.

The principal town seated on a rising ground near the center of the Island, is Newport, it is well-built and paved, and exceedingly pleasant. The buildings (tho' few

few of them are grand) are neat and handsome, so that few places are more satisfactorily visited by strangers.

Carisbrook Castle, about a mile from Newport, is a fine piece of ruins. It was once a considerable fortress, and is said to have been erected by Whitgar, a favourite of Cerdic, King of the West Saxons.—Richard de Rivers, Earl of Devon, in the reign of Henry I. improved it, and Queen Elizabeth repaired it, but it is now fallen into great decay; state prisoners were formerly confined in this castle; the last of whom was the unfortunate Charles, I. who was kept in it eight months, by Colonel Hammond, the then Governor of it for the parliament. The window through which the King attempted his escape from thence is still to be seen.

We cannot close our account of this Island better than with the following eulogium of an ingenious writer upon it.—“In

short

short, says he, such is the richness of the soil, such the plenty, variety and perfection of its produce, as well as pleasantness of situation, that it has often been called the garden of England. This indeed is a very high compliment, as England itself has been looked upon as the garden of Europe; but as this spot is daily visited by numbers of gentlemen and ladies of all ranks, we shall neither echo nor anticipate the judgment of others, but leave it to them to determine how well it deserves so great a character."

PORTSMOUTH MACHINES, and STAGE-WAGGONS.

Messrs. CLARKS Flying Machine, (in one day) sets out from the King's-Arms Inn, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday night at ten o'clock, for the Spread-Eagle and Cross-Keys Inns, in Gracechurch Street, LONDON, and returns from thence every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Their other MACHINE,

Sets out from the Blue-Posts Inn, every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday night, for the Golding-Cross Charing-Cross, and returns every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Their

Their GOSPORT COACH also,

Sets out from the Red-Lion in GOSPORT, every Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday night, for the Spread-Eagle and Cross-Keys, Gracechurch-Street, and returns every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.——Inside passengers 18s. Outside 10s. 6d.—Inside passengers allowed 14lb. weight, for all above, to pay one-penny per pound.

Their PORTSMOUTH WAGGON,

Sets out from the Blue-Posts Inn, every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday morning, for the White-Hart and King's Head, in the Borough, and returns from thence, on the same days.

Their GOSPORT WAGGON,

Sets out from the Red-Lion every Monday morning, for the Bell-Savage, Ludgate-Hill, and returns every Thursday.—It takes up and lays down goods at the Black and White-Bear Inns, and White-Horse Cellar, Piccadilly.

CHARGES OF BATHING.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
I F the person goes in with a guide	0	0	9
If without a guide - - - -	0	0	6
Subscription for three months - -	0	10	6
Ditto for six months - - - -	0	15	0
To the guide each time, if	}	0	0
they go in by themselves,			
If the guide goes in with them - -	0	0	6

POSTS

P O S T S.

THE London mail is dispatched from Portsmouth every day at two o'clock in the afternoon, and comes in generally about six — No mail is received from London on Mondays.

The cross road mail comes in on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at seven o'clock in the morning, and goes out on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at the same hour,

N. B. There are Hoys go to the Isle of Wight every day. — And to Southampton every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

STAGES from PORTSMOUTH to LONDON, with their distances.

		Miles.
To Petersfield	_____	18
Liphook	_____	8
Godalming	_____	12
Ripley	_____	12
Kingston	_____	12
London	_____	11
		73



F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

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